

Updated Clean Water Act Reporting Status for Yahara Chain of Lakes

In accordance with the requirements of Section 303(d) of the Federal Clean Water Act, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) updates biennially the list of waterbodies requiring the development of Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) studies, which are plans to restore water quality for waters that are not meeting water quality standards. This list, also known as the Impaired Waters List, is updated to reflect waters that are newly added or removed based on new information or changes in waterbody status. Recent phosphorus data from Lakes Mendota, Monona, Waubesa, and Kegonsa indicate that these waters do not meet phosphorus water quality criteria. This information compels the WDNR to propose a change to the Clean Water Act reporting status for these lakes from “meeting criteria” to “not meeting criteria but restoration plan exists.”

WDNR will hold a public meeting on December 19, 2013 at 4:00 PM at the WDNR Service Center in Fitchburg, WI ([3911 Fish Hatchery Rd.](#)) to provide an opportunity for public input on [WDNR's proposal](#) to place the Yahara Lakes (Lakes Mendota, Monona, Waubesa, and Kegonsa), a chain of lakes along the Yahara River, into listing category 4A - waterbodies with EPA-approved TMDLs. During this meeting, WDNR will explain how interpretation of monitoring data compel this listing decision and the implementation of the [Rock River TMDL](#) along with other watershed initiatives will address the phosphorus-related water quality impairments in the Yahara Lakes.

In addition to the public meeting, a 30-day comment period will be held from December 12 – January 13, 2013 for the public to provide written comments on WDNR's proposal to change the listing category for the Yahara Lakes. Comments received during that period, and WDNR responses, will be forwarded to EPA as supplemental documentation for their review and approval of Wisconsin's 2012 Impaired Waters List. Email is the preferred comment format, but letters by mail are also accepted. Comments can be emailed to WDNR at DNRImpairedWaters@wisconsin.gov or sent by U.S. mail to Aaron Larson, WDNR, Water Evaluation Section (WY/3), P.O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707.

Supporting Justification Documents

1. [Current EPA-approved Rock River TMDL document](#) [PDF]
2. [Category 4A listing justification document](#) [PDF]
3. [Phosphorus Loading and Lake Response Analyses for the Yahara Lakes \(Lathrop and Carpenter, 2011\)](#) [PDF]

Ongoing Water Quality Improvement Efforts

Efforts to reduce phosphorus pollution in the Yahara Lakes are already underway. The Clean Lakes Alliance Strategic Action Plan for Reducing Phosphorus outlines pollution reduction strategies that aim to achieve the water quality goals for the Yahara Lakes.

[Yahara CLEAN \(Capital Lakes Environmental Assessment and Needs\) Strategic Action Plan for Reducing Phosphorus](#) [PDF]